THE CHURCHES IN ACTION

NEWS LETTER

OF THE

UNIVERSAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL FOR LIFE AND WORK

AND THE

WORLD ALLIANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP THROUGH THE CHURCHES

The above-mentioned organisations are not officially responsible for the opinions expressed in this News Letter
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LIFE AND WORK

It may be of interest to the readers of *The Churches in Action* if I share with them some of the impressions I have received from my travels in Europe during the past four months. That the condition of the whole world is extremely critical may be taken for granted. Everywhere one feels an overpowering sense of tension which keeps nerves on edge and produces a profound anxiety among the nations and the different groups of society. At the same time one feels everywhere a genuine desire, indeed a yearning, for peace, which expresses itself often in heartrending ways. Coincident with this desire for a real peace is the conviction in many quarters that the foundations on which our present peace rests are precarious and that some basic change must take place before the war-weary nations can give themselves wholeheartedly to economic and financial reconstruction. The churches have long been waiting for statesmen and other national leaders to take decisive steps and they must continue to stress the seriousness of the world situation in which the danger exists that at some point chaos may break out. Without any doubt, these decisive steps must be supported by the will of the people and by a change in the hearts of men. Unless the peoples of the different countries learn to trust one another, no mere political readjustment will permanently avail.

This gives the Christian Church its unique opportunity. For the church, as an all-embracing œcumenical community, has points of contact with the people of the various countries and is therefore in a position of peculiar advantage as an interpreter of each to the others. It is no small cause for satisfaction that in the Universal Christian Council we have an agency through which this work of interpretation can be carried out. An impressive illustration of the kind of service the Council is able to render has recently been given. During the height of the tension between Germany and other countries, which followed the announcement of the boycott against the Jews and other measures designed to limit freedom in the University and in the Press, the Council received many messages from Christian bodies in different countries calling for some public protest on behalf of the Christian conscience, while from Germany came communications asking for suspension of judgment till all the facts were known. As a result of these communications the Secretary of the Council visited Berlin and had a conference with the leaders of the German Church, as a result of which he gained much valuable information and a deep impression that the leaders of the churches were not unmindful of their responsibility to safeguard the freedom of the Christian conscience, to help the suffering and the oppressed and to maintain the church's independence in every sphere. Further, the importance of creating a real understanding of the widespread changes of this national revolution, which is a revolution in the literal sense of that term, was very apparent. It was particularly valuable to realise the great hope of the church that these vast upheavals would in the end be for the good of the people in every class and that meanwhile great new opportunities would present themselves to the church in its service to the whole nation. All our impressions confirmed the conception clearly expressed by Hitler in his last great speech before the Reichstag that the responsible leaders in Germany desire peace and that the concentrating of all the forces of the nation is designed primarily to mobilise public opinion for the task of internal reconstruction and not for any aggressive design against other countries. On the contrary, Germany is ready to co-operate in a peaceful manner with other nations for the reconstruction of the political and economic conditions of the world.

It was a great joy to feel that the leaders of the church in Germany realised and appreciated the effectiveness of œcumenical co-operation and that they wished to build up still closer œcumenical relations with the churches of other countries. Just at present the energies of these leaders are engrossed in the reorganisation of the German Church in such a

manner as to pave the way, in close relationship with the great national movement, for the union of the various churches, *(Landeskirchen)* in **one** German Protestant Church, to strengthen its independence and liberty and to make it thereby of widespread service to the whole nation[1]. This movement of our German fellow-Christians will be followed, I am sure, with the keenest sympathy by all those who are working for a real unity of the church.

The Conference at Rengsdorf, which took place at the very moment when the revolution was at its height, forms one of the most impressive memories of my German visit. The fact that such a conference could be held at such a place and at such a time in an atmosphere of confidence and goodwill, augurs well for the future of our movement. (See report below).

Both at Athens and at Constantinople, I had an opportunity of conference with leading representatives of the Orthodox Church, including the œcumenical Patriarch, in which their interest in our movement was impressively shown. The Patriarch repeated the statement made some years ago by his predecessor, Basilius, that the Orthodox Church believed in an international council of churches and desired to see one established.

At Rome I witnessed the celebration of the 10th anniversary of the Fascist revolution, and at the same time the beginning of the Holy Year. I was impressed with the strong hold which the Fascist movement has upon the Italian people and with the atmosphere of hope and enthusiasm everywhere apparent. It is significant that the great film which commemorates the success of the revolution begins indeed with the glorification of war, but ends with an impressive demonstration of the triumphs of peace. At Rome I had an opportunity of conferring with leading Roman Catholics and gained a clearer understanding not only of the way in which that great Church is working for world peace, but also of the obstacles which must be overcome before that work can become as effective as one could wish.

It will be good news to all lovers of our movement that during the last weeks informal conversations have been going on between the leading representatives of the different branches of the œcumenical movement looking towards closer co-operation and more effective plans. It is hoped that in the not too distant future these conversations will bear fruit in effective and impressive action.

To all the good friends who have supported our movement in the past I would say that if ever it needed support it does so now. Wherever one looks one sees opportunities of helpful activity which only our limitation of men and means prevents us from following up. Whatever can be done now to support M. Henriod and give him the help he needs will bear fruit ten times over.

W. Adams Brown,
Chairman of the Administrative Committee.

[1] Particulars of the *latest* developments of the ecclesiastical question in Germany will be found in the Institute's Information Service.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE.

The Administrative Committee met in London on May 5 and 6. Dr. W. Adams Brown took the chair, and the Bishop of Chichester, Bishop Ammundsen, M. Guillon, the General-Secretary and the Director of Research were present, together with Dr. S. McCrea Cavert, (Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches of America), who was in Europe at the time.

It was noted with gratitude that in spite of difficult conditions, as much from the material point of view as from that of international relations, the activity of the Institute, the work of the Research Department and the plans for conferences and study weeks were taking their normal course, and that with careful administration and the continuance of regular support from the different sections of the movement, the financial prospects might on the whole be regarded as encouraging. Recent events in Germany and the preparation of the World Economic Conference were the subject of prolonged discussion. The reorganisation and future plans of the Youth Commission were approved, as were the report of the Research Department and that on the Rengsdorf Conference. It was decided to develop an information service, as being indispensable to the radiation of the Institute's activities, which would report on work of the League of Nations and of the International Labour Office. In this connection, it was also decided to recommend to the American and British Sections that they should supply permanent collaborators with the Research Department at Geneva.

Finally it was decided to hold an Executive Committee at Novi Sad from September 9 to 12.

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL ORDER.

For the third Oecumenical Study Conference[1] on the subject of the Church and the Problem of Social order, some twenty-five theologians and sociologists assembled at Rengsdorf (Rhineland) from March 8 to 15. All the principal churches belonging to the Stockholm Movement were represented, from the Orthodox and Anglican to the Lutheran and Reformed groups. Since at this conference the foundations for the coming years had also to be laid, the work was carried on at very high pressure ; it was, however, greatly facilitated by the hospitality of the Rhenish Church.

[1] It is not possible to go further into the results of the conference here, but a detailed report containing the main points of the papers and the discussions will be published by the Institute. Outlines and bibliographies for study groups are also being prepared.

[2] See The Churches in Action, No. 1. pp. 6-7.

The will of God in the order of the state and of economics, the revelation of this will and the ensuing specific responsibility of the church, these were the great questions before the conference. Varied as were the approaches made by the different churches to questions of social order, it was possible, in spite of all divergencies, to find common ground which offered not only possibilities for further and more fruitful discussion, but also enabled the conference to arrive at common conclusions on essential questions.

After these discussions on the theological basis, the way was clear for the question as to **the Christian judgment on the various social and economic systems.** Although it was not possible here to arrive in the same degree at common results, the common basis reached in the theological discussion proved of immense value when analysing some main problems of present day society. Particular discussion took place on the conception of work, on the problems of property and of class struggle, with the intention of elucidating the distinctive viewpoint of the church. How far, for example, in the various social systems, can work find its meaning as a God-given duty and is the conception of work perhaps the crucial point today when judging the value or non-value of a social system, — these are questions which were thoroughly discussed, being questions to which peoples and states must all seek and find an answer, in the face of unemployment figures of from thirty to forty million. Thus at Rengsdorf the specific task of the church in the struggle for a solution of the social problem was clearly indicated : to seek for a deeper understanding of the ultimate causes of the crisis and at the same time to create the necessary conditions for its removal.

In order to spread the results of this conference within the churches, **national study conferences are urgently needed.** A Swiss study conference on this subject took place at the end of May, dealing with the same problems from the particular viewpoint of the Swiss Church.

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The attitude of the Churches towards the **abolition of fee-charging employment agencies** has been set out in a report by the Research Department based on information provided by the churches specially interested[1]. It is also to be found in the joint report which was submitted, at the beginning of April, in collaboration with the Y.W.C.A., the Y.M.C.A., the International Migration Service and other organisations, to the International Labour Office, and which is being put before the competent commission of the seventeenth International Labour Conference in June. In a general introduction, the joint report indicates the particular character of the non fee-charging employment agencies, which are conducted by private and church organisations and by Christian youth associations. Then follow short individual reports from the organisations which have jointly prepared this memorandum and finally, and of particular significance, there are the declarations and recommendations which have been made in view of the proposed international regulations and which contain the main arguments for an appropriate recognition of this type of employment agency[1]. A summary of the reports and a full statement of the recommendations have just been published in the June 10 issue of the *Informations Sociales* of the International Labour Office.

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The Geneva Convention of 1933 for the **struggle against the consumption of narcotics**[2] had obtained the required number of ratifications by April 14 and will therefore come into force as anticipated. Right up till the last, the fate of the Convention, the formation of which had been the work of ten years, was in the balance, for a number of ratifications were still lacking.

Acting on information from the Research Department, which worked in close touch with the Research Department of the International Missionary Council, the Churches of the Universal Christian Council did all they could to urge their Governments to make ratifications in time. We may assume that this action on the part of the churches and other Christian organisations has contributed in no small measure to the fulfilment, even at the eleventh hour, of the conditions necessary to bring the Convention into force. The Research Department will report later on the further questions and tasks which will emerge to make this Convention really effective.

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The Research Department will extend its **Information Service** and will publish special reports from time to time. This information service will be intended first and foremost for the Life and Work national committees, for study groups and other interested bodies and can be obtained from the Research Department on request. In addition to reports on such work of the League of Nations and of the International Labour Office as is of importance to the Churches, it will contain the results

[1] See *The Churches in Action,* 1933. No. 1. p. 8.

[1] Report presented to the International Labour Office on the Abolition of fee- charging employment agencies, Geneva, 1933. To be obtained through the Institute.

[2] See *The Churches in Action,* 1933, No. 1. p. 8-9.

of studies undertaken by the Research Department, news of the social activities of the Churches, and systematic surveys of important literature on Christian sociology. The next issue will contain contributions on the International Labour Conference, on the relief work of the Churches to the unemployed, and book reviews.

WORLD ALLIANCE

OFFICERS MEETING IN LONDON

In London on May 8th and 9th the President and three of the five Secretaries of the Alliance met together. There were present : Lord Dickinson, Bishop Ammundsen, Dr. Drummond, M. Jezequel and Monsieur Henriod. Dr. Wm. Adams Brown took part in some of the meetings.

A message was sent to the Church Peace Union of America and it was decided that a presidential letter should be addressed by Lord Dickinson to all the National Councils, recommending them to use all their influence in these troublous times in favour of the fundamental principles of the Alliance. A motion received from the Dutch Committee on the subject of the anti-semitic measures taken in Germany has been referred to the German Committee in accordance with the procedure required by the constitution of the Alliance and letters received from the Society of Friends and from the International Labour Office were ordered to be placed on the Agenda of the next meeting of the Executive Committee. Plans for the Youth Commission and its reconstitution in such a way as to unite the interests of Life and Work with those of the World Alliance were approved. The Committee, on the other hand, had to make serious retrenchments in the budget, made necessary by the fall of the dollar, these retrenchments affecting the subventions to several of the Commissions, the Baltic Regional Conference, as well as the annual meeting of the Management Committee which it was decided to replace by an enlarged meeting of the Executive Committee. This meeting will be held in Sofia — which was the place chosen for the Management Committee — from the 15th to the 19th of September and the programme will be practically the same as that which had been planned for the full meeting of the Management Committee.

CHRISTIAN YOUTH IN RUSSIA.

Some time ago, the press of the Russian emigrants spoke of the constitution of groups of young people in Soviet Russia who met in the name of Christ in order to strengthen Christianity amongst youth, in spite of all interdiction. These groups of Christian youth have received the name of " Christomol ". (The name " Christomol " is in contrast to the name " Komsomol " which signifies in Russia " Union of Communist Youth ".)

The enormous importance of this event will be understood if it is mentioned that the formation of " Christomol " has taken place in conditions almost identical with those which existed at the beginning of Christianity.

In their blindness the persecutors have forgotten the most simple of truths : only indifference can injure faith. Now all persecution, in purifying the very source of faith, the love of God, contributes to the growth of that love. Nevertheless, we have seen with sadness that the people remain silent when churches in Russia are destroyed.

Those who allow themselves to be thus swayed lack faith. The people live inactive knowing that all that is most sacred must be hidden in the depths of the soul. But youth, separated on purpose from all the past, brought up on atheism, terrified and deprived of all spiritual good, has broken down its banks ; it can live no more without confessing its faith.

Youth has felt that " faith without works is dead " and it has passed to acts like the first Christians who, nineteen centuries ago, feared neither the " living torches " of Nero, nor the wild beasts in the arenas of heathen Rome, showing boldly their ardent love for Christ.

God be blessed ! We are all the more happy to greet our dear brothers of the " Christomol " as their appearance on the surface of life in Soviet Russia confirms us in our profound conviction. We know that the way which we follow is the same spiritual way which will lead Russia towards the resurrection and the new life.

Extract from " Nouvelle Voie ", January 1933 monthly bulletin of the " Bureau des Travailleurs Chrétiens Russes à l'étranger ".

PRAYER.

O God our Father, draw Thy world unto Thyself, help it to rise above the narrow boundaries of nations, and to aspire to the great plans that Thou hast laid out for Thy children. May the nations rise above the things that divide mankind and seek by faith a world made one in the love of Thee. Bring justice, freedom and peace not by might nor by power but by Thy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN.

HERE AND THERE.

The headmaster of a well-known public school in England, with the consent of the Governors, has introduced a substitute for the O.T.C. (Officers Training Corps). His purpose is to train citizens for peace instead of for war ; the scheme is voluntary, but when it was laid before the boys, 95 per cent of them volunteered to take part in it. The underlying idea is to awaken a corporate sense of social responsibility (a) to the school (b) to the community as a whole. The scheme therefore falls into three parts. The first is that of physical training, leading to physical fitness, with some knowledge of personal and public hygiene and of first aid. In the second part it is intended to undertake work of community service on one afternoon a week, such as building a pavilion, constructing a swimming bath, tennis courts and running track, practical forestry, with lectures and demonstrations. All this covers term-time activity ; the third part of his scheme is devoted to holiday enterprise. It includes such matters as visits to factories and industrial areas, practical work in South Wales and other distressed areas, camping in summer with boys from the East End of London and similar districts, foreign travel, " hiking " and other simple methods of getting to know the people of other countries. Each boy is encouraged to sign on for spending a week or ten days a year in at least one of these ways.

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The group known as the " Chevaliers de la Paix" has just opened a students' hostel in Paris. It is established in a private house in the heart of the Latin quarter, 23, Rue Vauquelin, and students will find there a gay and homely atmosphere. A few rooms will also be reserved for foreign visitors who are spending a few days in Paris. We are sure that this hostel will be welcomed by all those who, when they are in Paris, appreciate contacts with French families ; for, French people open their doors and hearts wide to those who are introduced to them on personal recommendation such as the hostel will provide. We hope that this new venture will be widely supported for it meets a real need. Full particulars will be given by Mr. Ehretsmann, 31 St. Margaret's Avenue, Whetstone, London, N. 20.

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The Danish Group of Anti-militarist Clergymen and Ministers recently sent a petition to the minister of ecclesiastical affairs (Member of the Cabinet) in which the group asked that church bells should no longer for used for purposes of mobilisation. (In Norway it was resolved in 1929, that the clergy should not in future assist mobilisation in any way and that church bells should not in future be used.) The Danish bishops also discussed the matter and supported the petition. The press reported this action and much public interest and some agitation was stirred up especially in conservative circles.

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The Franco-German section for European Mutual Aid has for its objects to make tangible, by a gesture of mutual dependence, the sentiments of peace which are held by thousands of French people towards their neighbours and particularly towards the Germans.

At Berlin a Foyer for Mutual Aid has been opened where French volunteers live amongst the German population to testify to them their sympathy and endeavour to ease their misery as much as they can. The Foyer will be open during the day to children and their parents and a canteen will be established. The work will be run in close collaboration with similar French organisations. The Foyer in Berlin will be a centre of co-ordination for the organisations which already work for Franco-German friendship.

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Madame Jezequel, General Secretary of the Commission for the Education of Children for Peace writes that the Commission's last publication " Histoire Vraie " has been published in German, Swedish, French, Belgian, Spanish Danish, Italian and Greek. It is hoped to publish also an English edition. The lantern slides illustrating the work of the Commission and the general work of the World Alliance have been distributed in 15 countries and have been much appreciated by parents and children.

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We hear from Dr. Cesare Gay that he has spoken of the work of the World Alliance at a youth camp in Sicily and that a youth conference was held at Naples recently. Another Youth Conference is arranged to take place in the Waldensian Valleys from August 25th to September 2nd.

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The Swiss Committee of the World Alliance sent the following message to the Disarmament Conference :

" The moment when the Disarmament Conference takes up its work again, the Swiss

Committee of the World Alliance will make known the interest and confidence with which it follows its efforts. Amongst our people and in religious circles we await precise and strong decisions with a view to progressive disarmament, lightening the burden of the nations in these times of economic crisis and carrying to all peoples the sense of security and peace without which any serious reorganisation of the world is not possible.

"We ask God to bless and inspire the members of the Disarmament Conference in the task which is at the same time both terrible and magnificent ".

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The association known under the name of " Service Civil International " is an organisation founded and directed by a Swiss engineer, M. Pierre Cérésole. Its object is to promote international friendship by means of giving help to needy populations. It recruits for this purpose volunteers from all professions and from all nationalities. Under the direction of a competent chief, these volunteers are sent into localities having great need of help and there, lodged and fed, but not receiving any salary, they work clearing the streets, rebuilding ruins, working on the land etc. They undertake nothing which can compete against ordinary labour. Some "sisters" have also been recruited who occupy themselves with housework and cooking. The " Service Civil " worked at Verdun after the war, at Lagarde (South of France), after the floods, at Lichtenstein and in Switzerland after the landslides etc., at Brynmawr and at Rhos in Wales, where they helped the local unemployed to construct swimming baths, public gardens and playgrounds. For this last work the volunteers were 20 in number and of six different nationalities, the majority being Swiss. The final object of the " Service Civil " is to obtain, in the countries where military service is obligatory, the recognition of civil service as the equivalent for military service for conscientious objectors and to sustain and fortify the hope that service of this kind will become, little by little, the only thing to be thought of for the national defence of the different countries.

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The Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches has passed the following resolution :

" The Federation of Swiss Protestant Churches asks the Federal Council through their delegates to the Disarmament Conference to find a solution on international grounds of the problem of the traffic and exportation of arms and munitions.

Moreover, it considers it inadmissible, that, even before the conference meeting on Swiss territory had proposed even the least resolution with this object, Switzerland should participate in the delivery of arms and munitions of war to foreign countries.

It declares that neither the present economic distress, nor the gain resulting from this manufacture and traffic can stand in the way of the urgent demands of the Gospel.

It has confidence in the measures that the Federal Council will take for helping the workers who will be affected by this deprivation."

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It is estimated that there are in the world to-day some tens of thousands of persons who are without nationality and who lack the assistance which that word implies. This is apart from certain groups of refugees (Russians, Armenians, etc.) assisted by the Nansen Office. This problem of statelessness instead of diminishing has been aggravated by recent political events and the sad plight of persons without nationality constitutes not only a challenge to the humanitarian instincts of all men and women of goodwill, but also a serious danger to the good relations of states.

The Society of Friends in an appeal issued from the International Centre at Geneva suggests that the League Council at its meeting this month should appoint a small committee including one or two representatives of the Nansen Office, who should propose to the Council at its next meeting a plan whereby

(a) stateless persons would be placed under the care of the League ;

(b) the Nansen passport and the assistance now given by the Nansen Office to Russian and Armenian refugees would be extended to all stateless persons ;

(c) the Nansen Office would be empowered to promote and co-ordinate various forms of official and unofficial action designed to favour the migration, settlement or employment of stateless persons.

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Eight million ex-service men made their voices heard in Geneva in March. These men are grouped together in organisations and societies of which the British Legion is one and they sent their delegates to Geneva to put their views before the Disarmament Conference. The number actually assembled in Geneva was well over four thousand. A strong resolution was adopted embodying principles on which the organisation of peace must be based : (1) a

system of arbitration complete and universal, (2) no recourse to force, (3) security realised by collective pressure, (4) substantial simultaneous and progressive disarmament both material and moral, (5) suppression of private manufacture of and private traffic in arms, (6) effective mutual international control. This resolution, backed by the urgent desire of eight million men, friends and ancient foes alike, was presented to Mr. Henderson. The delegate for the British Legion was enthusiastically supported when he declared that ex-soldiers prefer acts to pacts and that " the scrapping to-morrow of a thousand big guns and a few hundred bombing planes by mutual consent " would spread a greater sense of security over Europe than anything else.

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We wish to draw particular attention to a pamphlet that has been published on the subject of the traffic in arms under the title *The War Trade and the Christian Conscience.* It is obtainable from The Peace Committee, Society of Friends, Friends House, Euston Road, London N.W.1, price 6d.

GENERAL NEWS ITEMS

THE DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE.

Retrospect and Prospect

by Bertram Pickard

It is now sixteen months since the Disarmament Conference assembled on February 2nd, 1932 and it is not surprising that public opinion has become impatient. In order, however, to evaluate the present position and future prospects for disarmament and so to answer the question ' has the Conference failed ? ', it is most important to recall the atmosphere in which it opened.

Governmental and official opinion was never confident. Talk of postponement was common, and actual postponement of the Conference was only averted through the zeal of a handful of statesmen backed by a public demand for disarmament, unique alike in its extensiveness and precision. Even the most loyal protagonists of disarmament were modest in their demands and expectations. In January of 1932 Dr. Christian Lange (General-Secretary of the Interparliamentary Union and intimately associated with the preparatory work for the Disarmament Conference) wrote :

> " The Conference of 1932 will be only the first instalment in the process of the demilitarisation of the States. The further it can get along the road of Disarmament, the better. At any rate it should be able to secure the contractual limitation of armaments, and thus transfer an important element of international policy from the field of anarchy to place it under contract and law. This will really mean a revolution in the relations between nations."

Lord Cecil, moreover, despite his reiterated insistence upon the need for substantial reduction of armaments, as well as limitation, put his maximum demand for reduction at 25% on armaments expenditure which, given the fall in prices, was a moderate demand enough.

Remembering that the Sino-Japanese conflict had before the Conference opened assumed menacing proportions, it is easy to understand why pessimists were plentiful, whilst optimists were relatively few, and these few modest in hope, if firm in determination.

Nevertheless, looking back over these long sixteen months a curious phenomenon is evident. Despite manifold political difficulties leading to more than one adjournment, and not a few crises, the fact remains that the goal envisaged has become steadily more ambitious. Writing in *Peace* in April 1933, Mr. Henderson refers to the proposals for the abolition of military and naval aviation, and of artillery of more than 4 in. calibre, as two instances where aims have advanced, but there are others. Under the Draft Convention prepared by the Preparatory Committee it was proposed that the **use** of chemical warfare should be prohibited. Now it is proposed to try and prohibit **preparation** as well. Under the Draft Convention a Permanent Disarmament Commission was to have very attenuated powers of supervision. Now the view is almost universally held that very extended powers of supervision must be exercised by the Permanent Disarmament Commission and its agents, not excluding the right of detailed and unrestricted investigation on the spot. Again, it is significant that six months after the Conference opened President Hoover proposed reductions in armaments amounting on the average to something like a third of existing establishments — a figure which certainly would have been regarded as utopian when the Conference opened but which, nevertheless, has since become generally accepted as a reasonable goal to keep in view for average reductions under the first Disarmament Convention.

The explanation of this progress of ideas and aims is perhaps the following. There is first the general reason that once embarked upon an important enterprise, statesmen feel bound to reach a result which will at least appear, in the eyes of the world, to fulfil their pledges and justify their efforts. That is why the enemies of Disarmament tried so hard to prevent the Conference meeting at all.

It might be said without much exaggeration that the whole of the debates have centred around two controversies : 1) the controversy between the classic French thesis that disarmament can only follow security, and the Anglo-Saxon thesis that disarmament is one of the best avenues to security ; and 2) the Franco-German controversy as between Security and Equality.

Since in political discussion the outcome is usually a compromise or via media between conflicting views, it might have been expected that the trend of the Disarmament debates would be towards compromise positions between the major doctrines at issue. This is in fact precisely what has happened.

In the Security versus Disarmament controversy mutual concessions have been made. The United States Government has been converted to ' consultation ' and the abandonment of neutrality whilst both the British and American Governments have seen the force of the French demand for strict supervision — a notable voluntary relinquishment of national sovereignty. The French for their part have conceded that ' qualitative disarmament ' (the elimination of certain so-called aggressive weapons) though allowing of mass reductions in armaments is also a factor in security, since it increases the relative efficiency of defence over attack.

As to the issue between Security and Equality, this was really the issue between Security and Disarmament over again, since the only way to grant equality of treatment to Germany (the moral and political case for which was overwhelming) and at the same time refuse rearmament (which would be a monstrous result of any Disarmament Conference) was in fact to scale armaments down rapidly towards the German level.

This last issue has in fact become (as far-sighted workers for Disarmament recognised from the very beginning) **the** issue of the Conference. The outcome indeed, at the time of writing is still uncertain. After two months of crisis President Roosevelt in his epoch making message of May 16th to heads of Governments pointed to a line of compromise between the British Draft Convention and the German demand for equality of treatment — a compromise, moreover, designed to prevent rearmament.

This suggested compromise was neither more nor less than the proposal that a decision should be taken in principle to abolish the major weapons disallowed to Germany at Versailles (i.e. big guns, tanks, war planes and chemical warfare) the actual elimination to take effect over a transitional period. At the moment of writing, this suggested policy — which was accepted by Herr Hitler in his Reichstag speech as a basis for agreement — has not yet been translated into the necessary amendments to the British draft.

But it may be safely prophesied that the ultimate success or failure of the Conference and of the Convention that emerges will be largely determined by the thoroughness, or otherwise, with which this principle is applied in actual practice under the Convention.

This only goes to prove how wise the innumerable Committees working for disarmament have been to follow the clear-sighted and statesmanlike lead given by Lord Cecil and his colleagues from various countries who at the Conference of the International Federation of League of Nations Societies at Budapest in 1931, formulated a policy which, whilst not ignoring other aspects of the problem, pointed to ' qualitative disarmament ' as the first sure step towards the triple goal of Disarmament, Equality and Security.

The success of the Peace forces in the realm of ideas should persuade us all — if we need any persuading — to resist any tendency to ' defeatism ' or disarmament weariness, and to continue tenaciously, undeterred by political events east and west that are playing into the hands of the war-makers and the war-traders, to exert every influence we may have towards securing positive results here and now.

It is essential to get quickly a Convention that will register the progress in ideas and methods above outlined, and which would thus provide a definite basis for new campaigns (greatly facilitated by the existence of a Permanent Disarmament Commission) in a cause, the logic of which is irrefutable, and the righteousness not to be gainsaid.

Geneva,
31st May 1933.

YOUTH COMMISSIONS.

At a joint meeting of the Youth Commissions of the World Alliance and of the Universal Christian Council held at Luneray, near Dieppe, on April 22, it was decided to merge the two in a single Commission. This Commission will work, in association with leaders of youth activities in various countries, to ensure the study of social and international questions by the existing Christian Youth organisations, to spread the ideals of the Universal Christian Council and of the World Alliance among youth in general and to bring the needs of youth to the knowledge of the two movements. The Bishop of Ripon has been elected chairman and M. de Félice (2, rue de Montchoisy, Geneva), secretary. The Commission will be maintained by grants from the two movements and by any voluntary contributions that may be forthcoming.

In its reconstituted form, the Commission will carry out the programme already planned by the World Alliance for a Franco-German meeting in France in July ; a German-Polish meeting, if general conditions permit ; a Youth week in September in the Balkans and an International Youth Week from August 29 to September 4 in the neighbourhood of Geneva. The subjects proposed for study by young people between eighteen and twentyfive years of age who are invited to take part will bear on the rights of the individual, of the State and of humanity in general from the Christian point of view. These subjects will be presented by three highly qualified young speakers and will then be discussed in groups. Previously, an address will be given on " What must the attitude of the Christian be in the face of anti-social relations between nations and between classes in a world whose interdependence is becoming more and more apparent ? " The programme will also provide for addresses on National-Socialism in Germany and on the crisis in America. It will

include religious services and meditations and will close with an address on the present day value of Christianity.

BULGARIAN-JUGOSLAV CONVERSATIONS.

An official visit to Sofia of representatives of the Orthodox Church of Jugo-Slavia was made at the beginning of May, preceding the Balkan Conference at Bucarest. The meeting was duly announced in the press and made a very good impression in both countries. Resolutions were passed advocating a spirit of concord and unity between the two nations ; emphazising the need for close co-operation between the two sister churches ; recommending the elimination of all that is likely to create misunderstanding and controversy and the inauguration of plans for intellectual and social rapprochement between the two nations. In order to give practical expression to these ideals and to return the visit of the delegates from Jugo-Slavia, the Bulgarian National Council will shortly visit the Jugo-Slav National Council, the visit to conclude with a Mass said at Ochrida by representatives of the two Councils.

THE BALKAN CONFERENCE OF BUCAREST.

At the Conference[1] which was convened at Bucarest from May 15 to 19 by the World Alliance and by the Universal Christian Council, members of the Orthodox Churches of *Bulgaria*, *Greece*, *Jugo-Slavia* and *Roumania* met together. The Rev. H. L. Henriod took part as General-Secretary of the World Alliance and of Life and Work, together with several representatives of both movements, and a number of Roumanian professors, priests and students attended as guests.

His Holiness the Patriarch of Roumania accepted the Honorary Presidency, and by his visit to the Conference as well as by his reception of it at the Metropolitan Palace, he gave very special support to the conference which, in all its work, revealed itself as an Orthodox study conference. Particularly significant impressions were gained by the conference on account of its *joint organisation by the World Alliance and Life and Work*, an arrangement which met with complete success and the repetition of which on future occasions was expressly requested by the delegates.

The first officially arranged Balkan Conference had to aim **first and foremost at rendering present and future tasks as clear and concrete as possible.** In spite of all the obstacles and difficulties with which the Orthodox Churches have to contend in the Balkans and which came up clearly during this conference, there was evidence of a deep **interest in the social mission of the Orthodox Churches,** rooted in the very foundations of the Orthodox creed and life, and which emerged as perhaps **the** decisive factor in this present conference.

In the **social section** (Life and Work), the study conference dealt, by means of speeches and supporting material, with the **social task of the church,** arising in particular for the Orthodox Church out of its biblical and dogmatic foundations. On the basis of a discussion on the agrarian problem in the Balkan countries, the questions of a definite attitude on the part of the churches towards the social order were examined, and finally, through a survey of the main present day problems and their treatment by the churches, the present and future scope for social work by the churches was investigated.

After hearing the report of the national committees of the **World Alliance,** the conference went into the Balkan countries' peace problem and the tasks facing the Orthodox Churches in this connection.

The minority problem was handled in a private session which was marked by a candid exchange of thought and led to definite and unanimously accepted conclusions. In this session, for which the discussions of the preceding day had paved the way, it was clear what real and definite efforts had been made to find the truest solution of peace for these nations, and what powers lay in the Orthodox creed and life for creating fellowship in social and political life, powers that can only originate in the deepest of foundations, in the living Christ Himself. The discussion on the **struggle against the Godless Movement,** which was opened in a very distinguished manner by Dr. Zernoff, formed a strong connecting link between the two conferences.

The desire for an immediate attack upon the various tasks was expressed in the **resolution adopted by the conference** to create a standing committee in every Orthodox church, in the closest contact with the ecclesiastical authorities, as a centre for the work to be undertaken, co-operating closely with each other and with the Geneva centre of the oecumenical movement.

SOME IMPORTANT DATES.

Geneva, June 20-21. — Meeting of the Advisory Committee on Research.

Paris, August 1-3. — Committee of Faith and Order.

Paris, August 3-4. — Meeting of Consultative group of the Œcumenical movement.

[1] Only a summary of the lines on which the conference developed can be given here. A detailed report on its work and results can be obtained from the Institute.

Paris, August 4-5. — Administrative Committee meeting of the Universal Christian Council.

Gland, August 29-Sept 4. — International Youth Study Week.

Geneva, Sept. 4-5. — Meeting of the presidents and secretaries of the World Alliance.

Novi Sad, Sept. 9-12. — Executive Committee of the Universal Christian Council.

Sofia, Sept. 11-16. — Balkan Youth Week.

Sofia, Sept. 15-19. — Enlarged Executive Committee of the World Alliance.

N.B. *It would be very helpful if those readers who have not already done so would fill in and return to us the post card enclosed in the March issue. We shall assume that those readers who do not reply by August 15 do not wish to receive* The Churches in Action. *The yearly subscription is 2 Swiss francs. Our postal cheque number is* : I. 572 *Geneva (Christian Social Institute).*

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS SOCIETIES.

The XVIIth Annual Plenary Congress was held at Montreux from June 3rd-7th, 1933[1]. It was presided over by the President of the Federation, Viscount Cecil, and attended by delegates of affiliated League of Nations Societies from twenty-four countries. The Congress admitted to new membership : the Turkish League of Nations Society, the Finnish Peace Society and the South African League of Nations Union, bringing the number of its members to thirty-eight.

Resolutions were adopted with regard to the situation in the Disarmament Conference, the League of Nations and the Sino-Japanese conflict, the World Monetary and Economic Conference and the importance of collaboration therewith of the International Labour Organisation.

As regards disarmament, the policy of the Federation outlined at Buda-Pest in 1931 and at Paris in 1932 was developed in two important directions. The French delegation accepted that the abolition of the weapons forbidden to the defeated states should involve the actual public destruction of a substantial part of such material in all states. On the other hand, the German delegation accepted that control by the future Disarmament Convention should include periodical investigations and should " safeguard from any form of repression such persons as in good faith may give evidence as witnesses before the bodies entrusted with supervision." The idea originally proposed that immunity should be granted for all sorts of publications by an international body was discarded, because it was felt that immunity of such a nature would tend to invite propaganda against the armies for other motives. The *rapporteur* on the disarmament question, Professor Rolin, of Belgium, made it clear in public session that during the time when Germany was expected to renounce aggressive weapons whilst other powers still possessed them Germany should be allowed to have such defensive weapons as anti-aircraft guns and the right to develop her frontier defences, now prohibited in the Versailles Treaty.

As regards the private manufacture of armaments, the resolution demands that armament firms should not be permitted to manufacture or to retain stocks unless they have received orders from Governments. This provision tends to exclude production for stocks and for private traders. All orders for armaments should be controlled by a single official organisation, to be established by the state, and all such orders should be made public and at the authority of the permanent Disarmament Commission.

In the educational field, of particular interest is the drawing up at the Congress of a programme to be carried out by the national League of Nations Societies. It includes the sending of selected training college students and staff to the Federation's and other annual international Summer Schools in Geneva ; the exhibition at the Federation's headquarters in Geneva of typical text books and other material employed in the various countries for teaching about the League and the facts of contemporary international co-operation ; the mutual examination by League of Nations Societies in neighbouring countries of typical school text-books with a view to the elimination of hatred and false witness about neighbours and the development of mutual understanding ; and the preparation of a World Conference on Training in World Citizenship.

[1] The resolutions adopted and, later, the proceedings can be obtained on application from : The Secretariat General, Federation of L.N. Societies, 41 rue Juste Lipse, Brussels, or from the Assistant Secretariat General. International Federation of L.N. Societies, Geneva.

BOOK REVIEWS

Christian Unity in Practice and Prophecy, by Dr. Charles Macfarland, (MacMillan and Co., New York, 1933, $2.75).

Here is a comprehensive study of the problems which the various movements towards Christian unity present to Christian thinking. The author gives not only a survey of the history of the movements, of their extension and influence on the present religious situation, but also discusses the question of principles connected with these movements. The churches are suffering at present from the hampering influence of nationalism which is again menacing the unity which has already been reached by the various cooperative and federative movements. It is clearer than ever that the Christian world cannot give up without great danger the aim of collaborating in the many fields of Christian activity and of seeking a way towards closer fellowship and union. No man was better prepared by his studies and activities to present these problems to Christian thinking than Dr. Macfarland. He knows them not only from their theoretical aspect but from a long experience in the practical co-operation of the churches. Dr. Macfarland, now General-Secretary emeritus of the Federal Council of Churches, has already published a book on the International Christian Movements and has shown not only a unique knowledge of the federative tendencies in American church work, but also a remarkable insight into European problems of co-operation. This new book enters deeply into a real discussion of all the questions and objections connected with these movements and gives a far-reaching picture of the necessity for these movements and of their future.

Faith and Society, by Maurice B. Reckitt, (Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1932. 467 pp. (15/-net).

Every student of the history of Christian social thought will appreciate the excellent survey of the history of the Christian social movement in Great Britain and the United States given in the first part of this book. Still more interesting, however, is the second part, in which the author proceeds to a systematic examination of " the elements of a Christian sociology for to-day ". Characteristic is the insistence on the necessity for a solid theological foundation, asserting the distinctiveness of the Christian message and disentangling Christian social thought from all secular assumptions and objectives and at the same time showing the concern of the church for the order of this world. In stimulating and forceful chapters such problems as technical development, the philosophy of work, the extension of leisure, the basis of income, interest and investment, the control of industry, are elucidated in the light of the Christian faith. A fresh and courageous approach, consistency in argumentation and a closeness to reality make of this book a valuable contribution to present day Christian social thinking. The author writes as an Anglo-Catholic. It is therefore evident that Christian thinkers in other churches and countries would often approach these problems in a different way. But one can fully subscribe to the author's view that " we shall all contribute more to the discovery of what Christ desires his Church to stand for in the world today by affirming all that is positive in our religious convictions, than by any " charitable " pretence that our distinct points of outlook do not, or need not, count deeply with us now."

Morphologie des Luthertums, by Werner Elert. Vol. 1, Theologie und Weltanschauung des Luthertums, hauptsächlich im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert. (1931. 465 pp. 13.50 marks) ; Vol. II. Soziallehren und Sozialwirkungen des Luthertums (Soziologie des Luthertums) (1932, 544 pp. 15 marks. C. H. Beck, München).

This monumental work undertakes and succeeds in the ambitious task of surveying fully the origins and historical development of Lutheranism, both in the realm of theology and philosophy and in that of its social implications. After a lucid analysis of the central Lutheran conception of Christianity, justification by faith, the author shows the effects of this basic principle during the following centuries. The second volume contains an interesting and instructive account of the social ideals of Lutheranism and of their influence in the countries concerned, and entirely refutes the current representation that Lutheranism maintains an indifferent or even negative attitude to social life. The chapters on the relationship between religion and national life, and on the doctrine of the State and of Economics peculiar to Luther and his followers, complete this picture of Lutheranism in thought and action which forms a valuable document for the student of the social teachings of Christianity.

Le Catholicisme Non-Romain, by W. A. Visser 't Hooft, (Cahiers Foi et Vie).

The detachment of this survey of the Orthodox and Anglican branches of Christianity gives it a perspective that reveals a harmony of outline within these churches that is less apparent at a nearer view. Looking at English Catholicism, Dr. Visser 't Hooft is not concerned only with the descendants of the Oxford Movement, but with the whole Church of England, the Catholicism of which finds expression in emphasis on the sacramental life and in an increasing desire for adherence to the traditions of the primitive church, while freeing itself from later defects and abuses. To its radiation from the central doctrine of the Incarnation, with its stress on the human element, he attributes the Church of England's increasing tendency to put the solution of human problems in the forefront of its activities. In Orthodoxy the same concentration on the sacramental life is disclosed, but so intensified that a distinction is no longer possible between the sacraments as symbols and the sacraments as the central reality of the church itself. Dr. Visser 't Hooft traces the history of the Orthodox Church through all its vicissitudes, internal and external. He shows its strength and its weakness to lie at once in its remoteness from secular influences, which has

kept it uncontaminated but out of touch, although it is undoubtedly now in a state of spiritual renaissance. As an analysis of the relations of Anglicanism and Orthodoxy with each other, with the Old-Catholic, Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, this book might be described as a study of the unknown quantity that may turn the balance in favour of a reunited Christendom.

The Contribution of Religion to Social Work, by Reinhold Niebuhr, (Columbia University Press, New York. Foreign agent, Oxford University Press, Amen House, London, 13-6d. net).

These addresses were delivered as the Forbes Lectures for 1930 at the New York School of Social Work. In them, Dr. Niebuhr presents the church as the pioneer in charitable work and as the awakener of the social conscience. But in his opinion the church stops short of its goal. He believes that its activities are more productive of philanthropy than of social justice and that it tends, with its tradition of non-resistance, to fall a victim to social conservatism, to live " in terms of love within the social system " rather than to take steps to alter the system itself. The church, he suggests, should combine alleviation of distress with education in its economic causes, should point out the perils of economic power to those who wield it and should encourage, by social and individual analysis, the facing of facts and of motives. He urges the co-ordination of the religious ideal of love with the political ideal of justice, if religion is to play a constructive part in social reform. He makes a definite call to the church to advance further into the practical sphere. His book should bring added support to those movements which have already covered his ground and for whom this book is a reiteration of principles.

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